

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method comprising:
receiving, by a vending machine and from a customer, a request for a product to be dispensed by ~~[[a]]the~~ vending machine, in which the request indicates a first product;
providing, by the vending machine, a plurality of selectable menu options, each of which defines at least one customer service issue;
receiving, by the vending machine and from the customer, a selection of at least one of the menu options, thereby defining an indication of a customer service issue;
determining, by the vending machine, whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue; and
providing, by the vending machine and to the customer, an offer for a second product that is not the first product.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, in which providing an offer comprises:
providing an offer for one of
the second product, and
a refund.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, in which providing an offer for the second product comprises:
determining that a sales velocity of the second product is less than a threshold.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, in which determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue comprises:
determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue based on sales velocity of the second product.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
determining that the first product is unable to be dispensed from the vending machine; and

disabling the ability to request the first product.

6. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

receiving, by a vending machine and from a customer, a request for a product to be dispensed by ~~[[a]]the~~ vending machine, in which the request indicates a first product;
determining, by the vending machine, that the vending machine has malfunctioned.

providing, by the vending machine, a plurality of selectable menu options, each of which defines at least one customer service issue;

receiving, by the vending machine and from the customer, a selection of at least one of the menu options, thereby defining an indication of a customer service issue;

determining, by the vending machine, that a sales velocity of a second product is less than a threshold; and

determining, by the vending machine, whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue based on the sales velocity; and

providing, by the vending machine and to the customer, a compensation code that is redeemable for the second product.

7. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

receiving, via a customer interface of a vending machine and from a customer, a request for a product to be dispensed ~~[[by a]]from the~~ vending machine;

determining, by the vending machine and based on input received at the vending machine and from the customer, that a customer service issue exists;

determining, by the vending machine and based on a coin inventory available at the vending machine, whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue; and

providing, by the vending machine and in the case that it is determined that the resolution should be provided based on the coin inventory available at the vending machine, ~~[[a]]the~~ resolution to the customer, ~~in which the resolution includes providing an offer for a second product other than a first product indicated by the request.~~

8. (Currently amended) The method of claim 7, further comprising in which determining that a customer service issue exists comprises:
receiving~~[[,]]~~the input from the customer, ~~an indication of a customer service issue.~~
9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 8, wherein the receiving of the input from the customer, comprises further comprising:
providing, via the customer interface of the vending machine, a plurality of selectable menu options, each of which defines at least one customer service issue; and ~~in which~~
receiving, ~~from the customer, an indication of a customer service issue comprises:~~
———receiving, via the customer interface of the vending machine and from the customer, a selection of at least one of the menu options.
10. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9, wherein the providing of the plurality of selectable menu options, comprises further comprising:
determining, by at least one sensor of the vending machine, diagnostic data of the vending machine; and
~~defining~~determining, based ~~[[of]]~~on the diagnostic data, ~~at least one of the~~ plurality of selectable menu options.
11. (Currently amended) The method of claim 7, in which the determining that ~~[[a]]~~the customer service issue exists is further based on ~~comprises:~~
a determining, by the vending machine, that the vending machine has malfunctioned.
12. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, in which the ~~request includes~~
———~~an indication of a first product to be dispensed, and in which~~
———~~determining that the vending machine has malfunction~~~~[[ed]]~~ comprises~~[[:]]~~
———~~determining that the vending machine has failed to dispense~~~~[[e]]~~ing the
wrong~~first~~ product.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[12]]~~11, in which the malfunction comprises a failure of the vending machine to perform one or more of: (i) a playing of a movie trailer; (ii) a playing of a game; (iii) a rendering of a game result; and (iv) a playing of an audio file ~~determining that the vending machine has failed to dispense the first product comprises:~~

~~_____ determining that the vending machine has dispensed a product that is not the first product.~~

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, in which ~~determining that the vending machine has malfunction~~[[ed]] comprises[[[:]]

~~_____ determining that the vending machine has not having processed payment correctly.~~

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 14, in which ~~determining that the vending machine has not processed payment correctly~~ malfunction comprises[[[:]]

~~_____ determining that the vending machine has not having properly credited payment that is tendered by the customer.~~

16. (Currently amended) The method of claim 14, in which ~~determining that the vending machine has not processed payment correctly~~ malfunction comprises[[[:]]

~~_____ determining that the vending machine has not having properly dispensed payment that is due to the customer.~~

17. (Currently amended) The method of claim 7, further comprising:

~~determining~~selecting, by the vending machine and based on the coin inventory available at the vending machine, the resolution from a plurality of available resolutions
~~diagnostic data of the vending machine.~~

18. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[17]]~~11, ~~in which determining diagnostic data of the vending machine comprises at least one of~~ further comprising:

prompting, by the vending machine, the customer to verify information regarding the vending machine malfunction; and

receiving, via the customer interface of the vending machine and from the customer, a response to the prompt~~assessing data in a database;~~

~~receiving an indication of a customer service issue from a customer;~~

~~generating an image of at least a portion of the vending machine; and~~

~~receiving data from a sensor that is operable to sense a condition of the vending machine.~~

19. (Currently amended) The method of claim 7, in which the providing [[a]]of the resolution to the vending machine customer comprises at least one of:

a reservation of a product in a vending machine on behalf of the customer~~providing to the customer a product other than a product indicated by the request;~~

providing the customer with money via the vending machine;

establishing a credit balance ~~[[of]]~~at the vending machine;

applying credit toward a customer account of the customer;

providing a compensation code to the customer;

providing to the customer a voucher that is redeemable for a benefit from the vending machine;

providing to the customer a voucher that is redeemable for a benefit from another vending machine; and

providing to the customer a voucher that is redeemable for a product from a retail store.

20. (Currently amended) The method of claim 7, in which the providing of the resolution~~an offer for a second product other than a first product indicated by the request~~ comprises~~[[:]]~~ providing an offer for a~~one of the~~ second product other than the first product indicated by the request,~~and~~
~~a refund.~~

21. (Currently amended) The method of claim 7, wherein the determining of whether to provide the resolution in which providing an offer for a second product other than a first product indicated by the request comprises:

determining that the customer service issue is due to the customer not following instructions a sales velocity of the second product is less than a threshold; and

determining, based on the determination that the customer service issue is due to the customer not following directions, not to provide the resolution providing an offer for the second product.

22. (Currently amended) The method of claim 7, further comprising in which determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue comprises:

receiving the input from the customer via a microphone of the vending machine;
and

recording audio input received via the microphone determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue based on coin inventory.

23. (Currently amended) The method of claim 7, further comprising in which determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue comprises:

determining that the customer service issue comprises a jammed dispensing row of the vending machine whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue based on sales velocity of a product.

24. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[7]]~~23, wherein the resolution comprises altering, by the vending machine, a product display window to impede view of the products stored in the jammed row by the customer further comprising:

~~—— determining that a third product is unable to be dispensed from the vending machine; and~~

~~—— disabling the ability of a customer to request the third product.~~

25. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:

recording data associated with the customer service issue; and

determining a unique identifier for the customer service issue.

26. (Currently amended) The method of claim 25, further comprising:
determining ~~[[a]]~~the resolution further based on the recorded data; and
communicating an indication of the determined resolution to the customer.
27. (Currently amended) The method of claim 25, further comprising:
receiving, via the customer interface of the vending machine and from the
customer, information which identifies the customer.
28. (Original) The method of claim 25, further comprising:
outputting, to the customer, the unique identifier.
29. (Currently amended) The method of claim 25, in which outputting, to the
customer, the unique identifier comprises:
displaying an alphanumeric code indicative of a malfunction of the vending
machine that caused the customer service issue.
30. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[7]]~~25, in which the recording data
associated with the customer service issue comprises:
determining diagnostic data of the vending machine, wherein the diagnostic data
comprises at least one digital image at least one vending machine component; and
recording the diagnostic data.
31. (New) A vending machine, comprising:
a processor; and
a memory in communication with the processor, the memory storing instructions
that when executed by the processor cause the vending machine to:
receive, from a wireless handheld customer device operated by a customer
of the vending machine, an indication of a customer service issue at the vending machine;

select one of a plurality of available remedies to provide to the customer;
and
provide, to the customer, a compensation code indicative of the selected
remedy.

32. (New) The vending machine of claim 31, further comprising:
a printer that provides the compensation code via a printed voucher.
33. (New) The vending machine of claim 32, wherein the printed voucher comprises
a barcode indicative of the compensation code.
34. (New) The vending machine of claim 31, wherein the compensation code is
provided by transmitting an indication of the compensation code to the wireless handheld
customer device operated by the customer of the vending machine.
35. (New) The vending machine of claim 34, wherein the transmitting is conducted
via one or more of: (i) electronic mail; (ii) text messaging; and (iii) infrared radiation.
36. (New) The vending machine of claim 31, wherein the instructions, when executed
by the processor, further cause the vending machine to:
receive, from the wireless handheld customer device operated by the customer of
the vending machine, an indication of the compensation code; and
provide, in response to a receipt of the indication of the compensation code from
the wireless handheld customer device operated by the customer of the vending machine,
the remedy to the customer.
37. (New) The vending machine of claim 36, wherein the receiving of the indication
of the compensation code from the wireless handheld customer device operated by the
customer of the vending machine, comprises one or more of:

(i) reading information indicative of the compensation code from a display screen of the wireless handheld customer device operated by the customer of the vending machine;

(ii) detecting a DTMF signal transmitted by a speaker of the wireless handheld customer device operated by the customer of the vending machine, wherein the DTMF signal is indicative of the compensation code; and

(iii) receiving a wireless signal from the wireless handheld customer device operated by the customer of the vending machine, wherein the wireless signal is indicative of the compensation code.

38. (New) The vending machine of claim 31, wherein the wireless handheld customer device operated by the customer of the vending machine comprises one or more of: (i) a cellular telephone; (ii) a PDA device; (iii) a pager; (iv) a personal music player; (v) a gaming device; and (vi) a personal computer.